

THE LEISURE HOUR.

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"BEHOLD IN THESE WHAT LEISURE HOURS DEMAND.—AMUSEMENT AND TRUE KNOWLEDGE HAND IN HAND."—*Compton.*



TOM GRIGSON'S ADVICE.

WITHOUT INTENDING IT;

OR, JOHN TINCROFT, BACHELOR AND BENEDICT.

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CHAPTER XXII.—TINCROFT SENDS HIMSELF TO SCHOOL.

LEAVING the stormy latitude of High Beech, we retrace our steps to the classic shades of Oxford, where we find the undergraduate Tincroft, some three months after our last parting with him, again quietly ensconced in his rather dingy rooms at Queen's. The time

which had thus passed away had not been altogether unprofitably spent by him. He had, for one thing, put himself to school. It is said that a man who is his own lawyer has a fool for a client; and I have been told that when a doctor is seriously ill, he generally consults a brother Galen—whether or not it is because he has little faith in his own prescriptions I have no means of knowing. On a parity of reasoning, and on the same principle, it would seem that when a man sees occasion to put himself

to school, he should not be his own schoolmaster; and yet it is not so. There is, of course, one Teacher of whom all ought to learn, and the neglect of whose instructions is infinite loss. But next to Divine instructions, it is also important that every man should school himself, listening to his own reason and conscience. And this John Tincroft had done.

First, as to his faint hopes of ever succeeding to the inheritance which he believed to be his, he was, kindly enough, but faithfully, recommended by his monitor to forget them. He was reminded of the law's proverbial delays, and especially of the wearying and wearing and disappointing perplexities of a chancery suit. He was told in this new school (for it was new to him) that even if he could and did obtain possession of the Tincroft estate, to which he thought he had a right, and which it now seemed possible would be his—say if he should live another fifty years—it would not be worth having. "Therefore," said the schoolmaster, "dismiss it from your mind altogether, and if it must be still battled about, let the lawyers do it."

And John said, "I will."

Next, "You have been shamefully neglecting your preparations for India these many weeks," quoth schoolmaster; "you know you have."

John hung his head.

"Now, this won't do. You know, quite well, John, that you are not over bright. You have no genius; you are *not* a genius."

"Not a bit of one," John readily acknowledged.

"You have not much talent, even."

John admitted this with a sorrowful shake of his head.

"But you have a little, perhaps, and you used what little you had with a proper amount of industry for a time. But now, what have you been doing since you came back from that *harum-scarum*—"

"Please, don't. Yes, yes, I know. What have I been doing? Nothing, nothing," John confessed dolefully.

"For which you ought to be ashamed," said the schoolmaster; "but if you will set to at once, and make up for lost time, we shall get you through your examinations. And you know, John, that you can do nothing better than take that appointment. You won't get rich out there, I dare say. You haven't the talent for that sort of thing; but then you will, at all events, be doing something for yourself; and, in fact, it is the road plainly pointed out to you by circumstances, and you ought to walk in it."

"True, true," responded John.

"And not falteringly or imperfectly. Whatever your hand findeth to do, do it with all your might."

"I will, God helping me," John aspirated.

"The wisest thing I have heard you say yet, John," quoth the schoolmaster; "keep to that, and you will do. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct your paths. And there's another matter in which you require that help. You know what I mean."

John again hung his head and blushed deep red.

"That folly, and worse than folly, of yours, down in the country."

"I was very foolish, very; but was there anything worse than that in it?" John pondered.

"The thought of foolishness is sin," observed the schoolmaster, severely.

"God forgive me!" prayed John, penitently.

"He will if you ask him truly and sincerely. And he will help you too; but you have something to do for yourself, in which you must ask this help. You must put away from you those vain thoughts, those captivating remembrances. You have no business to be thinking admiringly of any daughter of Eve just now: and of her (you know who I mean) least of all."

"True, true," John confessed.

"Well, then, what a blockhead you must be to go about dreaming and mooning as you have done since you got back to Oxford. Why, the other evening, when you went for that stroll round the Magdalen water-walk, you looked so distraught, and played such moon-struck antics, that a pair of undergraduates burst out in a merry laugh when you passed them."

"I heard them," John reflected.

"You must have done with this nonsense," the schoolmaster went on. "You have done mischief enough, down there, already, for anything we know: and the only wise thing you did was when you ran away from the place. Now you must abandon all that folly, and pray to be forgiven the sin there was in it, whether more or less."

"God helping me, I will," said John again, and the best thing he could do or say, it was.

These conferences and lectures went on from day to day, and from the time they commenced John Tincroft began to amend. I am not quite sure that his internal schoolmaster did not—or rather, I am quite of opinion that he did—receive some assistance from no less a personage than the good old stout Baptist lady at Jericho, who, having been brought into personal acquaintance with the veritable son of the dear little Josiah at Saddlebrook, desired to make his further acquaintance if the gownsman of Queen's would so far condescend as to notice one so far beneath him.

John did not profess to condescend, and he would not have known how to do it if he had tried. It was out of his line, he said, and so it was; but his good-nature induced him to give ear to the request; and the subsequent intercourse with the pleasant and not vulgar, though fat, proprietress of Rippon's Selection redounded to John's advantage, though, perhaps, he was not at the time conscious of it.

Not that he had anything further to learn about the signature, which had, by the promptitude of Mr. Roundhand, been duly and legally attested. That subject was altogether exhausted and done with, so far as John was concerned. Neither did good Mrs. Barry and John enter into any discussions respecting the differences which existed between their several and separate religious communities. Indeed, if the compilation of hymns just referred to had not so constantly laid on Mrs. Barry's table, as her favourite book next to the Bible, John would almost have forgotten all about his new friend being a Baptist. But the charm of the intercourse was that in the company of the motherly old lady John could forget his isolation and loneliness, and receive sympathy and kindly regard from one of the softer sex, without the possible intrusion of such wild, vagrant thoughts as those which had entranced, yet troubled him, at High Beech Farm.

And so, as we have said, three months passed away: the short vacation was over, and with the commencement of Lent term came up Tom Grigson, fresh from the field, and fit for the first week to talk of nothing else but horses, dogs, foxes, and hares.

CHAPTER XXIII.—SOMETHING TO THINK ABOUT.

"By the way, Tincroft, I have been back a week or more, and you have never spoken a word nor asked a question about your old friends at High Beech. Where's your curiosity?"

"I have not thought much about them lately," said John, reddening rather; "the truth is—" he added, and then he stopped short with, "I suppose there is nothing new to tell."

"Isn't there, though? For one thing, it is all done and done for with Mark Wilson."

"I am sorry to hear it. Your brother carried out his threat, then?"

"No, not so bad as that. Brother Dick's bark is worse than his bite generally; and it was so in this case. I don't think, in any case, he would choose to sell up an old tenant, at least he never has done it. And as to Mark Wilson, the truth is he would have got very little by it, for the live and dead stock, crops and implements altogether, if sold, wouldn't much more than have paid expenses. No, he didn't sell him up. But, the fact is, things had got so bad that a week or two before Christmas, Mark himself came and offered to put himself into Dick's hands, to do what he liked with him and his belongings."

"The most sensible thing he could do under the circumstances, I suppose," said John. "And what followed?"

"Why, Richard offered to forgive him his rent—the rector did the same about his tithes—and to let him remain for a time in the house, which isn't much of a place, you know, and to keep his household furniture, which isn't any better, if he would give up possession of the farm at once, which he was glad enough to do."

"Who has the farm, then?"

"Oh, Matthew Wilson, of course, Mark's brother. He has had half a promise of it a good while, supposing Mark should have to leave; and it was only fair that Matthew should get it, if he can make anything out of it, for, by all accounts, he has lost a good bit of money by that sotish brother of his."

"Ah!" ejaculated John, mentally, "to be sure. I heard something of this that evening of the picnic." He did not say this, however, but substituted for it, "And what will the poor man do now he has no farm to attend to?"

"Not to attend to, you mean. Well, his brother has promised to employ him on the farm, if the stupid fellow will work; and, at any rate, to take some care of Mrs. Mark and the daughter. But it will be hard lines with them all, for Matthew Wilson is rather a sharp hand, and there isn't much love lost between any of them, I expect."

"A good thing for Miss Sarah that she is engaged to be married. I am glad to think that she will escape from this state of pauperism, at all events," said John, thoughtfully.

"Ah, but there's something else I have to tell you, Tincroft. That affair is all broken off. She and her cousin have had a quarrel, and there is an end to that connection."

"Do you really mean that, Grigson?" demanded John, visibly startled.

"I do mean it; and I reckon that's why Matthew is more willing than he would have been to lend the wife and Sarah a helping hand. Depend on it, he would have had nothing to say to them if Walter Wilson had gone on with his courtship."

"But—but I don't understand it at all. There was nothing amiss, was there, when I came away?"

"No, I suppose not; but a month or two ago, it must have been, the young fellow came post haste, and quite unexpectedly, from the north, where he has been the last two years, and had a desperate quarrel with the girl—You haven't heard about it before, I suppose, Tincroft?" said Tom, interrupting himself, and looking keenly into his friend's face.

"Of course not, Grigson. How should I have known anything on the subject?" John wished to be told, wincing a little beneath Tom's inquisitive look.

"Ah, well, I don't know, I am sure; but I am glad you have not heard of it before from any other quarter, for the truth is—I am rather loth to mention it, but the truth is (it all came out afterwards through Rubric, who told Dick all about it, and Dick told me) that you, John—there, don't be alarmed, dear fellow," for John began to show lively signs of astonishment—"that you had something to do with the quarrel."

And then, by cautious degrees, and tenderly (for Tom Grigson was a true-hearted friend) came out the whole story, much as I have told it. "But don't take it to heart, Tincroft," added the good fellow; "Dick and I both thought it right you should know what has been talked about. But of course it is no fault of yours. If the poor girl has been silly, or her father stupid, or that Walter Wilson outrageously and madly jealous, you can't help it, you know. So think no more about it; I shouldn't if I were you."

"How can I help it?" asked John, sadly; "for it is my fault—it is all my fault. I see it now. But I must know more about it, Tom, if I can. The poor girl—poor Sarah—how does she take it?"

"Why, she is sadly enough, by all accounts. But no wonder, you see, considering the trouble that has fallen on the whole of them."

"And, Tom—tell me true, dear Tom—don't you think the young fellow, Walter Wilson, will come round again? Lovers' quarrels, you know, are said to be only the renewal, or revival, or something of the sort, of love. Not that I know anything about it; but don't you think he will come round again?" asked Tincroft.

"Why, how should I know?" responded Tom, laughing a little at John's earnestness. Then he added, "Nobody believes it will be or can be made up. The fact is (it may as well come out) young Wilson has been crammed with so many stories, and is consequently so sure that you did make love to Mark's daughter, and that she encouraged you, on the principle of having two strings to a bow (in this affair I should say two beaux to her string), that he is determined never to speak to her again. At least, this is what I have heard."

"But, Tom, you don't believe what they say about me and Sarah Wilson, do you?" John Tincroft asked, piteously.

"No, of course I don't, my good fellow, and Richard doesn't believe it either. Why, you don't think we believe it, do you?"

"No, not if you say so, Tom. But I am so bewildered with your news that I don't know what to think;" and John pressed his two hands against his forehead. "To think that the poor thing should be suffering through my fault!" he added.

"I don't see much fault in it, Tincroft," argued

Tom Grigson. "Of course, if you had never seen Miss Wilson this could not have happened. And if you hadn't gone up to her father's house so often it might not have happened."

"True, true, true," groaned John.

"But as what can't be cured must be endured, we had better drop the subject, my boy."

"Ha! I'll think about it, that will be best," said John, dreamily, as was his wont when his mind was otherwise occupied than with the exact words he was speaking.

"I don't know about thinking, dear fellow. Thinking doesn't always do good. I have been thinking all day what a blockhead I have been not to tell Dick about that horribly long bill of Dry's; but I didn't tell him, and I don't like to write directly after coming up. So I have made up my mind not to think about it all this term. I recommend the same to you. You'll forget it all the sooner through not thinking about it."

"But not thinking about Dry's bill won't pay it, Tom, will it?" asked Tincroft, gravely.

"No, that's the worst of it," laughed Grigson; "so I shall be obliged to think about it some day, whether I like it or not."

"Ah! just so!" said John; and then the friends separated.

CHAPTER XXIV.—PRACTICAL RESULT OF JOHN TINCROFT'S SCHOOLING.

JOHN did think about it. He passed an almost sleepless night in troubled thoughts; and the next morning after chapel, drawing his friend Grigson aside, he proposed a walk round the Magdalen Water-walk.

"Very good, John, it will give us an appetite for breakfast."

"Grigson," said John, after they had gone round and round the walk, almost in silence, and they were returning into the High Street through the cloisters, "I am off by the 'Tally-ho' to-day. Can I do anything for you at the Manor House?"

"The Manor House! 'Tally-ho!' What is the meaning of this sudden freak, Tincroft?" his friend naturally enough asked.

"Ah! I don't wonder at your wondering. Look here, Tom. I have been thinking all night of what you told me yesterday, and though I know very well that I am a blockhead, and you know it too—"

"I know nothing of the sort. You are one of the best fellows I know. You have kept me out of a world of mischief here, and if you are not up to some things that some of us know too much of, you are none the worse for that."

"Well, blockhead or not, Grigson, I have made up my mind not to be a knave."

"Ho! ho! sets the wind in that quarter?" thought Tom, within himself; and then he said, rather sharply, "You don't mean to finish up by marrying that girl yourself, after all, do you?"

"No," said John, mildly. "I don't wonder at your thinking so, of course. But that isn't my meaning. For all that, I have done her great wrong, not wilfully, not wickedly, I hope not, at least not intentionally, only as there is sin in most folly, and if not sin there is harm. Yes, I have harmed the poor girl," continued John, sadly. "I see it all now, and I must undo it if I can."

"If I can understand what you are aiming at, may I be carbonadoed, dear fellow," rejoined Tom.

"I'll explain my meaning, if I can. You see, don't you? that by going so often as I did to High Beech Farm I laid myself open to suspicion."

"Well, if you come to that, of course the idea was that you were smitten. I know more about that sort of thing than I did then, for I know, before I came up, there was no road so pleasant to me as the road to the Mumbles. An abominable road it is, to be sure, but then there was a Kate at the end of it; and so I made a point of riding out there every day, almost."

"A gate?" said John, whose mind, occupied with one idea, could with difficulty take in another.

"A gate! No, no, a Kate,—Kate Elliston."

"I see; I see! My dear fellow, I wish you joy and success. But, as I was saying, I did lay myself open to suspicion. And I was warned about it. Your brother warned me; and so did Mr. Rubric; and, at the time, I am afraid I was more vexed than pleased with their kind intentions. But that does not matter,—my being suspected. The worst of it was, the poor girl came to be suspected too. And then, it seems, stories have been told about her, and she has lost a husband that was to be; and all through me. You said as much as this last night, Tom."

"Did I? I don't know that I did, Tincroft."

"Oh; but you did. And now, the least I can do, and the only thing I can do, as an honourable man, is to try and make things straight again between young Wilson and his poor cousin."

"You'll be a clever fellow to do that, John," observed his friend, thoughtfully, and inwardly quoting a couplet he had somewhere met with in his reading,—

"Who now to sense, and now to nonsense leaning,
Means not, but blunders round about his 'meaning.'"

"And how in the world will you set about it?" he asked.

"Ah! there I want your advice, Tom. I don't think it will do for me to go to the farm. There would be more suspicions then, I suppose."

"Yes, decidedly, I should say. No, I wouldn't go to the farm if I were you."

"I am glad you think as I do about that," rejoined John Tincroft, beamingly. "For, to tell you the truth—may I, Tom? I know I may, though, and that you won't betray me."

"Not I, John. Say on."

"Well"—and then he whispered in his friend's ear—"if things hadn't been as they were with me, and if Sarah Wilson had been free, I should have been proud to make her my wife; but under all the circumstances of the case, it wasn't to be dreamt of for a moment. I didn't think so much about it then as I ought to have done. And I ought to have kept away on that very account. But I have seen my terrible mistake since, and must do my best to remedy it."

"Whew," whistled Tom. "You want to put yourself out of temptation, then?"

"No, the temptation is past and gone, I hope. At least, I know I have striven and prayed against it. No, it is not of myself I am thinking, but of her. And it strikes me—doesn't it you?—that if I were to go and see your brother and Mr. Rubric, and tell them honestly that all the fault was mine, and that the poor girl was as innocent of anything like flirting as any modest girl could be—don't you

think they would believe me, and try to set matters straight again?"

"They would believe you, of course, John, as readily and strongly as I do. But as to setting matters straight—well, I think it likely they would try. I know they feel a good deal for—well, say for Walter Wilson, and I dare say they will for his cousin when things are put before them in the way you have put them now."

"Thank you, Tom; I should not care undergoing any mortification."

"Oh, no occasion for mortification that I can see," said Tom Grigson, cheerily. "There's no mortification in doing what is right, I think; and you are right in this, old fellow."

"Thank you heartily, Tom," said John, warmly. "Then we'll turn back, and I'll take my place for the 'Tally-ho,' and then go and pack up a few things for the journey."

"But, I say John," said his friend, presently, as they were emerging into the High Street, "suppose things shouldn't turn out as you wish to make them, what then?"

"I would rather not think about it," quoth John. "But now, can I do anything for you with Mr. Richard about that bill of Dry's?"

"Thank you, John; no, I think not; I fancy you have as much on your hands already as you can well manage," replied Tom Grigson, with a merry laugh. And then presently they reached Queen's, and each went to his own rooms.

"As good a fellow as ever lived, and as honourable a man as ever breathed; and his honour will undo him. If he doesn't marry S. Wilson after all, I'll be—carbonadoed. There! Shall I go after him, and tell him so? No, I don't think I will."

them sisters, mothers, and friends of the exhibitors—are peering down the wondrous tubes.

What do they see? Well, it would be impossible here to name all the objects. The remotest regions of the three kingdoms of Nature have been laid under contribution. Here are some minute and beautiful shells, dredged up by Dr. Carpenter from a sea-bottom 15,000 feet in depth. The next table shows us specimens of pond-life. We see strange and wonderfully-constructed creatures, part vegetable and part animal, disporting themselves alive before us. Some of these zoophytes have been fed with carmine, the better to exhibit their transparent bodies. Visitors are astonished to learn that these marvellous creatures are the common denizens of our ponds around London, and that, in view of their exhibition, most of them were procured on Saturday afternoon last at Hampstead Heath, Rainham Marshes, and Victoria Docks. Then the phenomenon of vegetable circulation is shown in the beautiful and celebrated water-plant *Vallisneria spiralis*—one of the most delightful spectacles the microscope affords. Next is a flake of coal—common house coal—laboriously filed and ground down with sand-paper and plate glass until it has become as thin and transparent as a sheet of note-paper. Through the microscope we can plainly see the vegetable spores and spore-cases (lying closely packed together) of which the coal is mainly composed. Here is a live frog, with its foot spread out to show the circulation of the blood. The room has now become hot, and the creature is the subject of commiseration from some lady visitors; but the exhibitor explains that the frog has been sent comfortably to sleep for a fortnight by means of a suitable soporific, and is all unconscious of his sympathisers. Next are more zoophytes—but we should speedily fill our space with references to such books as "Pritchard's Infusoria" and the "Micrographical Dictionary" did we try to do justice to this varied and wonderful exhibition of an amateur microscopical society.

No less than sixty of the microscopes we saw before us at this remarkable *soirée* belonged to the members of the society alone—that is, to the young men of Messrs. Leaf's establishment. It seemed incredible, until we verified the fact for ourselves. These exhibitors, whose lives might seem to be devoted to the microscope, are actually hard at work all day in one of the largest and busiest of the City houses. Microscopy is simply their evening recreation. "Occupied as are all of us during the day" (says the president of the society, Mr. Charles J. Leaf) "in an almost unceasing round of duties which command our attention, and frequently of anxieties and grave responsibilities, which harass our thoughts, it is of incalculable advantage that when these duties are over we should provide ourselves with some attractive and elevating pursuit, which can be carried on by our own fireside and shared in by those around it."

The Old Change Microscopical Society is indeed an admirable feature of that movement for retrenching the unnecessary hours of business, in which Messrs. Leaf and Co. have taken an honourable part. To many young men the mere scientific study might have at first little attraction, but where the philosophers are surrounded by cheerful groups of fair visitors, it would be difficult to name a more pleasant evening in the City than this exhibition of the sixty microscopes.

THE MICROSCOPE IN THE CITY.

VERY various are the recreations of the young men engaged in great wholesale and retail houses of business. Concerts, lectures, recitations, and other rational and enjoyable evenings have long been familiar, but till recently we did not know of an entertainment of a more novel and remarkable kind. An invitation to the annual *soirée* of the "Old Change Microscopical Society" revealed an unexpected scene, which would have delighted all advocates for the diffusion of useful and entertaining knowledge. The society, we were informed, consists entirely of *employés* in one city house—that of Messrs. Leaf, Sons, and Co., warehousemen, in Old Change.

We find our way to Cannon Street on a rainy February night and enter the brilliantly lighted hall of the City Terminus Hotel. Amid the dazzling decorations and a cheerful throng of visitors, we discern a series of oblong tables, ranging from one end of the spacious room to the other. On these tables are rows of microscopes, nearly all of them double-barrelled (binocular). Each instrument has its own lamp by its side, and is adjusted to a prepared specimen which is placed below it for examination. Each is also in charge of an exhibitor—one of the members of the society—who is ready to answer the inquiries of the visitor, or alter the focus of the instrument. Delighted guests—many of

THE MARVELS OF THE YELLOWSTONE.

FOR years marvellous tales have been rife among the hunters and mountaineers of the Far West, about a mysterious country in the heart of the Rocky Mountains, some three hundred miles south from the line of the British possessions. This region comprises within its limits the sources of the Columbia, whose waters flow westward toward the Pacific, and those of the Yellowstone—a large stream which, after trending eastward for several hundred miles, joins the mighty Missouri in its course to the Mexican Gulf. It was asserted that the course of the upper Yellowstone was broken by cataracts surpassing that of Niagara; that it flowed in one place through a cañon, or gorge, whose vertical sides measured more than a mile in depth; that on the shores of the Yellowstone lake were scattered the remains of idols, war-clubs, and utensils of an extinct race; and that the country abounded in hot-water geysers and mud volcanoes, surpassing all others hitherto known in height and volume. It was further added, that the Indians looked upon the mysterious country as the abode of evil spirits, and rarely, if ever, ventured to invade the solitudes of their haunts. To verify these loose rumours, a party of gentlemen, citizens of Montana, determined last autumn to attempt an exploration of the upper Yellowstone River, and solve the mystery. An account of the expedition has lately appeared in an American journal, from which it appears that rumour had in this instance but little exaggerated the savage grandeur of the scenery, which the author, one of the explorers, describes in a most graphic manner.

The nine gentlemen comprising the party were well mounted, and armed each with a needle-gun, revolver, and hunting-knife; a small packtrain loaded with flour, bacon, coffee, and sugar, in charge of two Mexican packers, following them, and completing their outfit. General Hancock, the general commanding in chief of the district, had courteously acceded to their request for a company of cavalry by way of escort; but when they arrived at Fort Ellis, the starting-point of the exploration, the commander informed them that he could not possibly spare them more than five men, with which small addition to their strength they bade adieu to this outpost of civilisation, and plunged at once into the vast unknown which lay before them. Having learned at the fort that a band of Crow Indians had preceded them the day before up the valley of the Yellowstone, they organised their party in anticipation of possible trouble from this quarter, and elected H. D. Washburn, Surveyor-General of Montana, as their chief and commander. It was determined to make but one march each day, camping about three in the afternoon, to obviate the necessity of unpacking and cooking dinner. It was also agreed that a picket guard of two men should be detailed each night to guard the camp and horses. In the afternoon of the day following, their attention was drawn to a small band of mounted Indians riding along the foot-hills on the opposite side of the river, travelling in the same direction as themselves, and evidently watching them with keen interest. That night the camp was guarded with more than usual vigilance. A severe rain-storm prevailing during the night may have saved them from a visit of these prowlers.

After remaining for some time at the lower cañon

of the Yellowstone—a gorge of about a thousand feet in depth, with vertical sides, through which the river tears at a fearful rate—they crossed the mountains above the cañon, and again descended into a broad and open valley. Here a strange freak of nature attracted their attention. Two parallel vertical walls, projecting from the side of a mountain to the height of 125 feet, traversed the mountain from base to summit—a distance of 1,500 feet. The walls were about thirty feet wide, and their tops were crowned with a growth of pines. Here an entire mountain-side had been washed away by wind and water, leaving, as the evidence of their united action, these vertical projections, which, but for their gigantic proportions, might readily be mistaken for works of art. "In future years," adds the author, "when the wonders of the Yellowstone are among fashionable resorts, there will be few attractions surpassing in interest this remarkable freak of the elements. For some reason, best known to himself, one of our companions gave to these rocks the name of the Devil's Slide."

Arriving at the mouth of Tower Creek, where it joins the Yellowstone, they were fairly within the precincts of the volcanic region, and where the wonders were supposed to begin. Here the *great cañon* commences, and extends to the foot of the *lower or great falls* of the Yellowstone, some forty or fifty miles, one of the most remarkable gorges in the world, equalising, if not surpassing, the famous one on the Colorado River. In its descent through this awful chasm, varying from a thousand to nearly five thousand feet in depth, the river falls almost three thousand feet. At one point, where the passage has been worn through a mountain range, the chasm was estimated to be a vertical mile in depth, through which the river, broken into rapids and cascades, appeared no wider than a ribbon.

"The brain reels as we gaze into this profound and solemn solitude. We shrink from the dizzy verge appalled, glad to feel the solid earth under our feet, and venture no more, except with forms extended and faces barely protruding over the edge of the precipice. The stillness is horrible. Down, down we see the river, attenuated to a thread, tossing its miniature waves, and dashing with puny strength the massive walls which imprison it. All access to its margin is denied, and the dark grey rocks hold it in dismal shadow. Even the voice of its waters cannot be heard. Obstructed by massive boulders and jutting points, it rushes madly on its solitary course deeper and deeper into the bowels of the rocky firmament. The solemn grandeur of the scene surpasses description."

The lower part of the cañon, along the eastern bank of the Yellowstone, bore a striking resemblance to the Giant's Causeway. It was composed of successive pillars of basalt, tier upon tier, separated by broad belts of cement and gravel. The columns, standing in close proximity, were quite regular in form, each about thirty feet high and from three to five feet in diameter.

The attrition of the stream for ages has worn the side of the chasm into the most odd and fantastic shapes. Some resemble towers, others the spires of churches, and others again shoot up lithé and slender

as eastern minarets, and these are "gaily painted by the waters of the numberless hot springs which ooze out from the fissures into a variety of tints and tones—white, red, purple, orange, etc.—fairly bewildering the eye with their dazzling variety of colour."

To avoid the slow and toilsome journey in following the sinuosities of the river, an advance party was sent forward to mark out a trail across the mountains in the direction of the "Great Falls," at the base of which the "great cañon" proper terminates. The party on their way ascended a lofty peak, ascertained by barometrical measurement to be 10,580 feet above the sea-level, which they named, in honour of their commander, Mount Washburn. From its summit, four hundred feet above perpetual snow, they were able to trace the course of the river to its source in the Yellowstone lake. Descending the mountain, they came to a small stream flowing into the Yellowstone, following which they crossed an immense bed of volcanic ashes, extending for several hundred yards on either side of the creek. Less than a mile beyond, they suddenly came upon a hideous-looking glen, filled with sulphurous vapour emitted by six or eight boiling springs of great size and activity. The entire surface of the earth was covered with encrusted sinter thrown from the springs, and jets of hot water were expelled from numberless natural orifices with which it was pierced.

"The springs themselves were as diabolical in appearance as the witches' cauldron in 'Macbeth,' and needed but the presence of Hecate and her weird sisters to realise that horrible creation of poetic fancy. To approach them was unsafe, the incrustation surrounding them bending in many places beneath our weight, and from the fracture thus created would ooze a sulphury slime of the consistency of mucilage. It was with great difficulty that we obtained specimens from the natural apertures with which the crust is filled—a feat which was accomplished by one of our party, who extended himself at full length upon that portion of the incrustation which yielded the least, but which was not sufficiently strong to bear him in an upright position, and at imminent risk of sinking into the horrible mixture, rolled over and over to the edge of the opening, and with the crust slowly bending and sinking beneath him, secured the coveted prize."

The party continued their journey for the next two days through a country broken up with innumerable ravines and masses of fallen timber, and made necessarily but slow progress, but near camping-time on the succeeding day they found themselves descending a mountain along the banks of a beautiful stream in the immediate vicinity of the great Falls of the Yellowstone. The stream, which they named Crystal Creek, just before its union with the river passed through a gloomy gorge, at the foot of which it breaks from a succession of rapids into a cascade of great beauty, which descends into a pool clear as amber, deep in the shadow of overarching rocks. After a second leap of more than eighty feet, it effects almost immediately its junction with the Yellowstone.

A more sublime scene than the Lower Cataract of the Yellowstone was never witnessed by mortal eyes. The river, from a width of 200 feet above the fall, is compressed by converging rocks to 150 feet, where it takes a plunge over a smooth level shelf, presenting the appearance of a vast green curtain veiled with glancing and dissolving foam-like festoons of lace. The height by measurement is 456 feet.

"A sheer, compact, solid, perpendicular sheet, faultless in all the elements of grandeur and beauty, it seems to be in perfect keeping with the stupendous character of the scenery surrounding it. The cañon, which commences at the upper fall, a half-mile above this cataract, is here at least a thousand feet in depth. Its vertical sides rise grey and dark above the fall to shelving summits, from which one can look down into the boiling spray-filled chasm, enlivened with rainbows, and glittering like a shower of diamonds. From the shelf overhanging the stream, 500 feet from the top of the cañon, and 180 feet above the verge of the cataract, a member of our party, lying prone upon the rock, let down a cord with a stone attached into the gulf, and measured its profoundest depths. The life and sound of the cataract contrast strangely with the sombre stillness of the cañon a mile below. There all was darkness, gloom, and shadow; here all was vivacity, gaiety, and delight. Seen through the cañon below the falls, the river for a mile or more is broken by rapids and cascades of great variety and beauty."

Between the lower and upper falls the cañon does not exceed from 200 to 300 feet in depth. The upper fall is entirely different from the lower, but in its peculiar way equally interesting. The stream, which above the falls is broken into frightful rapids, is narrowed between the rocks as it approaches the brink, and presently bounds through their stony jaws in a sheet of snowy foam over a precipice 115 feet high.

"What this cataract lacks in sublimity is more than compensated by picturesqueness. The rocks which overshadow it do not veil it from the open light. It is up among the pine foliage which crowns the adjacent hills, the grand features of a landscape unrivalled for beauties of vegetation as well as of rock and glen. The two confronting rocks overhanging the verge at the height of a hundred feet, could be readily united by a bridge, from which some of the grandest views of natural scenery in the world could be obtained. While just in front of and within reaching distance of the arrowy water, from a ledge projecting one-third of the way below the brink of the fall, all its nearest beauties and terrors may be caught at a glance."

Fascinated by the awful sublimity and beauty of the sights around them, the party lingered on the spot for several days, drinking in their fill of a scene than which the world contains perhaps no grander. At last they reluctantly turned their backs upon the glorious scene, and pursued their way up the river towards the lake. At some distance above the upper fall the rapids disappeared, and the river, expanding to a width of 400 feet, rolled peacefully between low verdant banks. They forded a creek strongly impregnated with alum, and three miles beyond they found themselves in the midst of volcanic wonders of great variety and profusion. The region was filled with hot springs and craters. Steaming vapour shot from the crevices of the incrustations around which large masses of pure crystallised sulphur had been deposited. Farther on they discovered a cavern, in whose mouth, about seven feet in diameter, a jet of sulphurous vapour exploded with regularly recurring report like a high-pressure engine. They also came upon a boiling alum spring, from the border of which they gathered a quantity of alum, nearly pure, but slightly impregnated with iron.

Continuing their journey, they shortly after entered another basin covered with the ancient deposit of some extinct crater, which contained about thirty springs of boiling clay.

"These unsightly cauldrons varied in size from two to ten feet in diameter, and the contents of most of them were of the consistency of thick paint, which they strongly resembled, some being yellow, others pink, and others dark browns. They were boiling at a fearful rate, much after the fashion of a hasty pudding in the last stages of completion. The bubbles, often two feet in height, would explode with a puff emitting at each time a villainous smell of sulphured vapour."

The atmosphere was filled with sulphurous gases, discolouring their watches and other metallic articles, and the river was impregnated with the mineral bases of the adjacent springs.

Returning one evening to camp by a new route from an exploration of this volcanic basin, dull thundering sounds like the discharges of distant mortars broke upon their ears. The reports were found to proceed from a mud volcano on the slope of a hill densely timbered. Huge volumes of smoke shot high up into the air through a crater thirty feet in diameter. Each report, which occurred as often as every five seconds, could be distinctly heard half a mile off, and the massive jets of vapour which accompanied them burst forth like the smoke of burning gunpowder.

"This volcano, as is evident from the freshness of the vegetation and the particles of dried clay adhering to the topmost branches of the trees surrounding it, is evidently of very recent formation. Its first explosion must have been terrible. We saw limbs of trees 125 feet from the ground encased in clay, and found its scattered contents 200 feet from it."

Next morning they broke up their camp, forded the Yellowstone, and shaped their course for the great mountain lake, which is the source of the river.

Lake Yellowstone is a lonely but lovely inland sea, everywhere surrounded by "forests primeval," and nestled deep in the Rocky Mountains. It has been currently asserted by the mountaineers who have visited this watery solitude, that its waters run both to the Atlantic and the Pacific, but such is not the case; the summit of the main chain passes, however, within half a mile of its southern shore. Its shape resembled "a human hand with the fingers extended and spread apart as much as possible." The palm of the hand represents the main body of the lake, and the fingers and thumb the deep inlets, which, like Iceland fjords, indent the southern shore. Verdant islands dot its surface, and the beach of rock crystal sand, scintillating in the rays of the afternoon sun, formed a most appropriate setting to the solitary mountain mere.

Its height above the ocean was ascertained by actual measurement to be 8,337 feet. It is 25 miles long and 80 in circumference, and is possibly the mighty crater of an extinct volcano. It abounds with trout of unusual size and superior delicacy; a great variety of water-fowl dots its surface, and the surrounding forests teem with deer, elk, mountain sheep, and smaller game, while farther within the fastnesses of the mountains the chance of meeting a grizzly, or the formidable emiss, or mountain lion, is by no means a remote one.

On one point on the lake shore are scattered in great profusion curiously wrought objects of slate,

varying in size from "a gold dollar to a locomotive." There were cups, discs, pestles, resemblance to legs and feet, doubtless the joint productions of fire and water. In these fanciful configurations originate doubtless the tales current about the war-clubs and idols of an extinct race existing in the Yellowstone country.*

On another part of the beach they found numerous specimens of cornelians, agates, and chalcedony.

Near the south-east end of the lake is the highest peak of the range. Two of the party ascended it. About two-thirds of the way up they were obliged to leave their horses and continue their ascent on foot. The altitude by barometrical observation was estimated at 11,163 feet.

"The grandeur and vast extent of view from this elevation beggars description. The lake and valley surrounding it lay seemingly at our feet, within jumping distance. Beyond them we saw with great distinctness the jets of the mud volcanoes and geysers. But beyond these, stretching away into a horizon of hazy mountains, was the entire Wind River range, revealing in the sunlight the dark recesses, gloomy cañons, stupendous precipices, and glancing pinnacles which everywhere dotted its jagged slopes. Lofty peaks shot up in gigantic spires from the main chain of the range, glittering in the sunbeams like solid crystal. The mountain on which we stood was the most westerly peak of a range which in long extended volume swept to the south-eastern horizon, exhibiting a continuous elevation more than thirty miles in width, its central line broken into countless knobs, glens, and defiles, all on the most colossal scale of grandeur and magnificence. The valley at the base of this range was dotted with small lakes, and cloven centrally by the river, which in the far distance we could see emerging from a cañon of immense dimensions, within the shadow of which two enormous jets of steam shot to an incredible height into the atmosphere."

This chain of mountains, the loftiest of the lateral ridges of the Rocky Mountains, is regarded by the Indians as the crest of the world, and among the Blackfeet there is a fable that he who attains its summit catches a view of the land of souls, and beholds the happy hunting-grounds spread out below where the spirits of the good Indians revel in the pursuit of their favourite pastime.

While struggling irregularly through the dense timber which covers the slopes of the main divide, one of the party, Mr. Everts, became separated from the others. Leaving his companions in pursuit of game, or for the purpose of viewing the country, was not an unusual occurrence, and consequently little was thought of Mr. Everts's absence. But when night came, their friend's disappearance began to excite grave apprehensions. To follow a track through a dense forest and over fallen timber would tax the perceptive faculties of an Indian, and Mr. Everts was quite near-sighted. Every endeavour was made to attract his attention by firing guns, and building fires on prominent points near the camp. Failing to find him, they changed their camp to the lake shore, and remained for more than a week searching for him in all directions.

* This legend especially captivated the imagination of the writer when he was travelling near the Falls of the Missouri in the spring of 1866. Preliminary arrangements were made for organising an expedition to solve the mystery of the Yellowstone; but the plan was never carried out, the writer shortly afterwards meeting with an accident, which brought his journeying in the western wilderness to an abrupt close.—P. T.

The weather was now (September 13) getting cold, and the next two days snow fell to a depth of two feet. Conjectures as to the probable fate of their poor lost comrade were numberless but futile. He was well mounted; when lost he was without provisions, but had with him a good needle-gun and ammunition. "We clung to the hope that, failing to find us on the second day, he had started for the settlements; in which case he might possibly be beyond the reach of the snowstorm." They continued their unwearied efforts until almost out of provisions. Then, leaving three of their number behind still to look for him, the rest of the party commenced their journey homewards, surfeited with the wonders of the Yellowstone, and believing that the interesting part of their journey was over. But a last and final "wonder" was to be added to the strange experiences of our enterprising travellers. Selecting to follow the Madison River, one of the three forks of the Missouri, to the settlements, they discovered, on the west side of Fire Hole River, a branch of the Madison, a basin literally alive with geysers and steam jets, which in volume and height dwarf even the far-famed ones in Iceland into comparative insignificance. They remained for several days, and made a thorough exploration of this wonderful basin. The most prominent geysers were named Old Faithful, the Castle, the Giant, the Grotto, the Fantail, the Giantess, and the Beehive; they were all in full activity in an area of two miles in length and one in width.

Old Faithful was so called on account of its almost constant action. It did not intermit for more than an hour at any time during their stay. It had a vent five feet by three, and projected a solid column of water to a height of eighty or ninety feet. About the crater of the Castle was the largest cone of incrustations in the basin. The ground for a hundred yards sloped gradually up to the cone, which itself rose thirty feet nearly perpendicular. It was called the Castle on account of shape and commanding appearance. A piece knocked out of the side of the mound of the Giant afforded a look into the crater, which was shaped like a hollow cylinder, and six feet in diameter. It discharged a column of water equal to the size of its crater to a height of a hundred feet. The day of their arrival it was in nearly constant action for three hours, after which it did not again discharge. The Grotto was so called from its dome-like crater of vitrified sinter, full of large sinuous apertures. One of the company crawled through one of these holes and examined the orifice, but when an hour afterwards a volume of boiling water shot through it to a height of sixty feet, he concluded that he had narrowly escaped being summarily cooked. The Beehive was quite small, but threw its water higher than any of the other geysers. The stream was less than two feet in diameter, but ascended, by accurate measurement, to a height of 250 feet. The Fantail geyser was so named from the fact that it discharged two streams from its orifice which spread out very much like a fan.

But the most remarkable of all the boiling springs was the beautiful geyser which they appropriately named the Giantess. The ground sloped gently to the mouth of the crater, which did not protrude above the surface, as was the case with the other geysers in active operation.



THE GREAT YELLOWSTONE GORGE.

"When quiet, it was a clear, beautiful pool, caught in a subsilica urn with a hollow, bottomless stem, through which the steam came bubbling like the effervescence of champagne from the bottom of a long hollow-necked glass; the mouth of the vase, represented by the surface, was twenty feet by thirty, and the neck, fifty feet below, was fifteen by ten. All at once it seemed seized with a terrible spasm, and rose with incredible rapidity, hardly affording us time to flee to a safe distance, when it burst from the orifice with terrific momentum, rising in a column the full size of this immense aperture to the height of sixty feet; and through and out of the apex of this aqueous mass five or six lesser jets were projected to the marvellous height of 250 feet. These lesser jets, so much higher than the main column, and shooting through it, doubtless proceed from auxiliary pipes leading into the principal orifice near the bottom, where the explosive force is greater. This grand eruption continued for twenty minutes, and was the most magnificent sight we had yet beheld. We were standing on the side of the geyser nearest the sun, the gleams of which filled the sparkling column of water and spray with myriads of rainbows, whose curves were constantly changing, dipping, and fluttering hither and thither, and disappearing only to be succeeded by others, again and again, amid the aqueous column, while the minute globules into which the spent jets were diffused when falling, sparkled like a shower of diamonds, and around every shadow which the denser clouds of vapour, interrupting the sun's rays, cast upon the column, could be seen a luminous circle radiant with all the colours of the prism, and resembling the halo of glory represented in paintings as encircling the head of divinity. All we had previously witnessed seemed tame in comparison with the perfect grandeur and beauty of this display."

Five miles below the geyser basin, on the west side of Fire Hole River, they came upon four lakes of boiling water. The circumference of the largest was 450 paces. The immense volumes of steam ascending from them first called attention to their existence. So much hot water flowed from them that the river was tempered for several miles below. No fish were found in the Fire Hole River, though after its junction with the Madison they were quite plentiful.

On the 22nd September, just one month after leaving Fort Ellis, the adventurers reached Farleys, the frontier rancho on the Madison River, and felt, after such wonderful experiences, as may readily be supposed, a little strange to find themselves again within the pale of civilisation.* By means of the Northern Pacific Railroad, which will probably be completed within the next three years, the wonders of the Yellowstone and the geyser basin will be rendered easy of access. Besides these lately discovered marvels, the enterprising tourist may visit and admire the kindred and hardly better known sights of the Falls of the Missouri, the fantastic eroded rock formations below Fort Benton, the

* From a late California paper I learn that the party on their arrival at the first settlement furnished two old mountaineers with six weeks' provisions, and offered a large reward if they succeeded in finding their lost comrade Mr. Everts, or should bring back his body. They found him, quite exhausted and nearly famished, about sixty miles from Bozeman. It seemed that his horse got away from him the day after he left the party. His gun was made fast to the saddle, and his revolver was in the holster, so that he had no means of providing himself with any food. During the snowstorm he built himself a shelter of pine-boughs above a warm spring. For thirty-seven days he lived on roots, and two marmots he caught in his hat. It was a week before he recovered his strength. This gentleman's narrative of the thirty-seven days spent in this howling wilderness will furnish a chapter of human suffering and endurance unmatched in horror by any hitherto recorded of frontier exposure.—P. T.

grand panorama of the three converging forks of the Missouri, and the stupendous architecture of the vast chains and spurs which traverse this *terra incognita*, and heightens the grandeur of its primeval solitude.

P. T.

ENGLISH PRONUNCIATION.

THE pronunciation of a language is always a subject of lively interest, or if we should say of *living* interest we might be nearer the mark. Languages fall under one or other of two categories, living and dead. Even the pronunciation of a dead language is not without interest, as we may see by the recent revival of discussion in the universities and elsewhere on our pronunciation of Latin and Greek. Mr. Gladstone, in his work on Homer, declares the English mode of pronouncing these two languages to be barbarous, and urgently needing reform. It obscures and almost destroys their harmony and dignity.

Of how much greater consequence, then, must be the uniformity, purity, and harmony of English pronunciation—a language both living and growing, every year counting many millions of new speakers, and which promises to become, if it is not already, the sovereign dialect of the world. French is receding, English is mightily advancing—a fact fully admitted by the late French statesman, Prevost Paradol, not without a previous comparison of numbers, and by him most eloquently deplored. But let us

"who speak the tongue which Shakespeare spoke,
The faith and morals hold which Milton held,"

exult in the fact, believing as we do that our language, above all other living tongues, is freighted with blessings to mankind.

Our language is a great trust, to be jealously guarded by each succeeding generation—and in two respects: firstly, in regard to the purity of its use in speaking and writing, and next, in regard to the uniformity and sweetness of its pronunciation. It is to the latter object that we here confine ourselves.

Now some persons may think that sweetness or beauty of pronunciation is a fanciful or trivial object—that language is for use, and that so long as we are understood, every object worth thinking about is answered. But this is not true, either morally or physically. Who is not sensible of a refining influence, when he hears our language beautifully pronounced—that is, with sweet, just, and easy intonation—where the vowels are allowed to breathe their sweetness and emphasis, and are not crushed out of existence by the more masculine element of the consonants, thus rendering our sufficiently rugged language still more harsh. It has been a common rule or maxim to say "Take good care of the consonants, and the vowels may be left to take care of themselves." We have the high musical authority of Mr. Hullah for saying that a more false and pernicious rule was never delivered, or more destructive of the harmony and dignity of speech. The vowels are the *female* moiety of speech, and they require all the tender usage which their sex so rightfully claims. They breathe sweetness, frankness, and music into speech, and they ought not to be silenced.

But my more special object is to draw attention to our mode of pronouncing *certain words*, and to endeavour to ascertain the true principle which ought

to guide us, and to show that the principle generally relied on is a false one, and quite untenable by argument.

What is the principle generally, if not universally, supposed to be the true one in determining pronunciation? *To follow the spelling.*

Now this at the first blush appears very plausible, and the most likely way to produce both correctness and uniformity. It has become the fashion nowadays to pronounce certain words differently from the old usage, out of regard to the spelling. I will instance the word *evil*. Till quite recently this word was pronounced as if spelt *evel*. What church-goer does not call to mind the novel usage in the familiar words "deliver us from *evil*?" It has doubtless a very stiff and pedantic sound, but inquire the reason of this modern alteration, and you are met with, "It is so spelt, and of course it ought to be so pronounced." It has even come to be thought vulgar or old-fashioned to pronounce it otherwise, and we are now threatened with a slavish and pedantic adherence to spelling as the orthodox principle of pronunciation.

This may seem a small matter, but there is more in it than at first appears. We must first inquire, How came the spelling of words to be determined? The multitude seem to believe that words were first issued, like coins from the mint, with their visible form or spelling defined—that our only care ought to be to conform to the spelling and pronounce accordingly. They seem to imagine that words were not in circulation until their sound was fixed by spelling, and so fixed by authority. I acknowledge that they do not thus state the matter formally to themselves, but it is not less true that some such absurdity is dimly floating in the depths of their consciousness. Whereas the truth is that the *spoken* word preceded the *written* word by we know not how many years, and moreover that its spelling grew up we know not how, and assuredly was fixed by no authority, but has been exceedingly capricious, and amenable to no rule. The common question, "How do you do?" at once poses the unthinking literalist. Here the round *o* subsides into the narrow *u*. Moreover, the *you* is pronounced as if there was no *o* in it. We may ask, Why is *you* to be worse treated than *thou*? You see the literal rule breaks down at once.

If you demand the reason of this infringement of a cherished principle, you will be told of the uncouthness of the sound, and the difficulty for the vocal organs, if the spelling was followed in this instance. True, that is a sensible reason, but that reason ought to induce us to return to the old and natural way of calling "*evil*" as if spelt "*evel*," instead of bringing together two narrow sounds, *e* and *i*. The ease of the vocal organs demands that a narrow sound should be followed by a broad one. Hence our fathers instinctively called it *evel*, like *axle*, without regarding the spelling, and to this pronunciation, if we are wise, we will return. It seems "stuff o' conscience" with many to duly give tongue to the *i* in *evil*; then why is it not also "stuff o' conscience" to sound the round *o* in "*son*," and not to call young Harry by the same name vocally as the luminary of day? It is folly and pedantry, and nothing else.

Let the question be referred to the common sense of any one to say whether it is rational to sacrifice the ease of the vocal organs to a dead mark on paper, which got there we know not how—for as long as memory runs back "*son*" has always been pronounced *sun*; but which having once got there is not

likely to be dispossessed; nor is it desirable, if we only regard it for what it is worth, and do not stupidly pay homage to it as if it was a law of nature. Is it not exquisitely absurd to pronounce the common form of salutation as we do, and then to stickle for pronouncing "*evil*" in the new mode, on the ground of the spelling, as if there was a sanctity about each letter which it would be sacrilege to disregard? and if so, how is it that we follow up "How do you do?" with that truly English formula, "What do you think of the weather?" pronouncing the last word as we do with no *a* in "*wether*" sheep? What in this case becomes of the majesty of the *a*, which, according to the silly purism now in vogue, ought to be sounded in "*weather*" as we sound it in "*wheat*"? But the *a* is rightly made quiescent, and for no other reason than the sufficient one that a better sound is thus produced.

And here we touch the principle of the whole matter. Which is the nobler thing, a dead mark on paper, or a living sound uttered by the vocal organs of man? Doubtless the living sound. Let us remember the "*word*" was spoken first, and afterwards written or printed. The spelling was intended to represent the *sound*, and not the *sound* to follow the spelling. Let us also remember that language was primarily given to us for speech, and only in a secondary and very subordinate sense for printing; nor let us forget that for one word written or printed, a million are spoken. Let us moreover bear in mind that the controversy between the *spoken* and the *printed* word is waged on quite unequal grounds. For while one form of spelling is as easily written or printed as another, it is far otherwise with the lungs and the vocal organs. The latter may be offended or distressed by one mode of utterance, while they would be soothed or gratified by another.

Take the word "*issue*." Who has not heard some clerical prig, when reading the prayer which asks for "a happy *issue* out of all their afflictions," insist upon hissing the double *s*, to the torture of our ears, but let us hope to the satisfaction of his own conscience? He will not call it "*issu*," as the generations hitherto have done, for where is the *h*? His tender conscience will not allow him either to add or to subtract a letter, so sacred is the spelling. Then why, oh man, dost thou ask for *shugar* over the breakfast-table? how durst thou interpose an *h* where there is no *h* in the spelling? why dost thou not ask for *sugar*? and how art thou justified in making mute the final *a* in thy "*tea*"? Thou callest it *tee*, not as it is spelt, *tea*. To speak plainly, this purism is only a piece of pedantic foolery, to be abhorred by all sensible men and women. What would Shakespeare have said if he had heard his fine and deep declaration,—

"Spirits are not finely touched,
But to fine issues,"

where the emphasis is so strongly laid upon "*issues*," marred and murdered by the silly sibilation of the double *s*, instead of interposing an unwritten *h* to avoid the annoyance?

But there are two little yet often-recurring words which seem selected as the Shibboleth of the new pedantic affectation—these are *him* and *her*. It has come to be thought by many vulgar not to sound the *h* in these words; yet why it should be vulgar to make the *h* quiescent in these instances, when nobody utters it in "*heir*" or "*hour*," it would puzzle any one to explain. What really ought to determine us

is the principle of euphony—which sounds best and is most pleasing to the ear is the only point. To sound the *h* in "hour," jars upon the ear, therefore it is rightly left mute. To sound it in "heir," as in saying "my heir," or "your heir," is also bad, though less distressing. Mr. Roebuck said that if any M.P., in addressing Parliament, were to say "the 'ouse," he would not be listened to if he had the eloquence of an angel. But here the principle of euphony tells the other way. The strong pronunciation of the *h* in this word lifts "the House" to dignity, and, therefore, to say "the 'ouse" has a mean effect, and gives a bad opinion of the speaker.

But to return to "him" and "her." Take the words, "I saw him." According to the old usage, it was pronounced almost or entirely with the *h* mute, the sound flowing; but according to the new purism, in order to sound the *h* you must make a dead stop at *saw*—I saw *him*. Thus, instead of the continuous flowing sound, like one word, which falls smoothly from the lips, a conscious effort is required to make the pause, in order to draw breath for the utterance of the *h*. Again, take the words, "tell her;" in rapid talk we sound it thus, "tell 'er," as one word and one flowing sound. Now how clumsy it is to stop at "tell," in order that you may sound the *h* in "her." That is a golden rule of Hamlet to speak

"Trippingly on the tongue,"

that is, flowing instead of jerkily, or, to use a musical phrase, to speak *legato*, not *staccato*. But "him" and "her," pronounced in the new mode, are, in nine cases out of ten, vocal nuisances, stopping the current of speech, and requiring a conscious effort to pronounce the aspirate.

Let us not forget that the usual silence of the aspirate in these words does not forbid its strong accentuation when the sense demands it. Thus in the words of Othello :

"She loved me for the dangers I had passed,
And I loved her that she did pity them."

There the *h* is energetically sounded, and the full force or emphasis given. It was a gross affectation in John Kemble to make two vocal syllables of "aches," instead of pronouncing it *akes*, in the well-known line in "The Tempest"—

"For this be sure to-night thou shalt have aches,"

but it was not a whit more silly than the prevalent pedantry which insists on sounding the *h* when it would be better left mute.*

In Italian, where the principle of euphony is carried out systematically, the aspirate is very sparingly used, and it has come to be omitted in writing. Thus "homo" is turned into "uomo," and "herba" into "erba."

Let us take another instance of a recent change for the worse in pronunciation. Time was when all classes called the town of Derby as if spelt Darby—all the high classes so call it still: it would be a sign of vulgarity to speak of Lord Derby, or "the Derby," sounding the *e*. But why is this a change for the worse? Simply because Darby is a bright, open, beautiful sound, and Derby is a dull, dry one. That is an all-sufficient reason why we should sound it in the old fashion, and call the county Derbyshire—not Derbyshire.

* We allow our contributor, long a clergyman in a cultured city in the West of England, to state freely his case. The reader must judge how far his criticisms are justifiable

It is amusing to observe this standing-out for the exact sound of each letter, when we still call the first two numerals thus:—"One" we call "wun," and "two," "tu;" in the first we change the *o* into *u*, and in the last silence the *w* altogether.

The Irish have a better and prettier way of calling "my" than we have; they call it *mē* short—thus "my portrait," "my daughter," is called by them "me portrait," "mē daughter"—the *e* short; whereas in our fashion we have the stiff, harsh sound of *mi*, which impedes the flow of sound, whereas in the short way of pronouncing it, one sound glides into another. At the Bar or in Parliament, who thinks of saying "m̄y lord,"—elongating the monosyllable? Then why stickle for it in other instances? Euphony is the sole true guide of pronunciation, for language is made to be spoken. Now speech is for *all*, writing is but for a few. The writers are but the thousands, the speakers are all mankind, every day and all day long. How apparent, then, is the absurdity of sacrificing the beauty of sound, together with the ease and comfort of the vocal organs, to certain traditional marks on paper, which the purists themselves are continually violating!

One instance more; I will take it from the name of this journal—the "Leisure Hour." It is universally pronounced in proper disregard of the spelling, thus, the "Leshur-our." Observe the *i* is quiescent in the first syllable, and the *e* in the second. Moreover, we double the *s* and interpose an *h*. Here are four violations of the spelling. If pronounced as spelt we should call it thus, *leezoore*. This would be simply intolerable, and therefore we consult the ease of our vocal organs, and disregard certain dead marks on paper.

G. D. H.

A MIDLAND TOUR.

VII.

SOHO—CHANCE'S GLASS WORKS—OLDBURY—THE BLACK COUNTRY.

I now bade farewell to Birmingham, its 200 miles of streets, and 60,000 houses, and proceeded on my tour, taking "Burritt"** as my guide. Scarcely had we left the Midland capital ere we entered the Black Country. Clouds of thick smoke pouring from tall chimneys, a general appearance of dinginess and dirt, and presently a kind of straggling waste with grimy red brick buildings all about it, vindicated its title to the name. On the outskirts of Birmingham we pass Soho, where once stood the famous establishment of Boulton and Watt,† so cele-

* I allude to his "Black Country and its Green Border Land," an excellent companion to the Midland tourist.

† The Soho Foundry, established in 1797, to furnish the castings which the parent establishment at Soho required, is still continued by the firm of James Watt and Co., and produces all kinds of engines for pumping water, blowing furnaces, driving machinery, and propelling steam-vessels. Marine and land boilers, mill gearing, sugar-mills, coining machinery, apparatus for pneumatic railways and for sewage works, are also largely supplied. The works cover an area of ten acres, and since 1775 have produced 1,878 steam-engines, having a nominal power of 70,958 horses, and equal to the actual force of 250,000 horses. These consisted of 319 pumping-engines, representing 13,800 horses; 1,000 rotative-engines, for manufacturing purposes, 25,986 horses; 460 marine-engines, equivalent to 31,169 horses. Of these, the largest were those of the "Great Western," to work the screw propeller, and having four cylinders of the united power of nearly 1,700 horses, but capable of an actual force of more than five times that amount. The early reputation of Soho has thus been not only maintained but extended, by the works which bore till recently the honoured name of "Boulton, Watt and Co., the name of Boulton being removed in 1848, after the death of M. R. Boulton, Esq., the firm now bearing the title of James Watt and Co."—Timmins's Industrial History of Birmingham" (1865).

brated for its connection with many most ingenious, costly, and beautiful manufactures;* but, above all, for that of the steam-engine. It was once, indeed, an establishment of the very highest national importance. Here "princely Boulton" assembled round him, and associated with him in his designs, many of the most eminent of his age, and linked for ever Watt's name with his own. Here are Muntz's Metal Sheathing Works, for the manufacture of that well-known alloy of copper and zinc ("one of the great prizes in the lottery of patents") which has superseded sheet copper in the protection of ships' bottoms. Here also are the works of Messrs. Tangye, where those remarkable lifts, presses, and other hydraulic machines are made, which are now so largely employed, and are found so useful in launching ships, pressing cotton and wool, punching and shearing metal, testing girders, chains, steam boilers, etc.; where also the differential pulley blocks are manufactured, which are recommended by Garibaldi for remounting artillery thrown down on the battle-field, and are used in the Cornish mines, on board our ironclads, etc., while they are also largely exported; and where, moreover, are made those wonderful "special" steam-pumps (with which the "Hercules" and "Monarch" have been supplied) which have neither fly-wheel, crank, governors, connecting-rod, nor eccentric, require no shafting, gearing, riggers, or belts, and work at any speed or pressure. Passing Smethwick, another scene of industry, where there are great alkali and soap works, and where the celebrated works long associated with the name of Fox and Henderson are situated, we presently come to Spon Lane, the equally celebrated glass works of Messrs. Chance, extending and rising storey upon storey over twenty-eight acres. We stop here, and by special permission are admitted to view them.

The visitor is first conducted to the place where the crucibles are made, in which the sand, soda, and lime—the three chief elements of the whole manufacture—are melted into glass. These crucibles are formed of Stourbridge clay, which is thoroughly kneaded and built up, piece by piece, entirely by hand. The pots thus made are slowly and carefully dried, and, after months of baking, are ready for the stock-shop, where about four or five hundred are generally kept for use, each being worth about £5, and capable of holding some two tons of "metal." We next come to the glass-house. The great gas furnaces are glowing and roaring, and the workmen passing to and fro before them, thrusting in their long iron blowpipes, on which each gathers a lump of glass and blows it into a globe-like form, which is again and again heated, blown, and worked, till it assumes the shape of a disc or wheel, and is carried away to be annealed, cooled, and cut up into what is then "crown glass." At other furnaces sheet glass is being made. The manufacture of sheet glass on the continental principle was introduced into this country by Messrs. Chance in 1832, when they secured the valuable co-operation of M. Bontemps, at whose works near Paris they had seen it produced. A better kind of this glass, surpassing even the best foreign, was brought out by Messrs. Chance in 1838: the Crystal Palace was afterwards glazed with it, and it has now superseded "broad" or "spread" glass,

the manufacture of which has been abandoned. The sheetglass is blown by the workmen in cylinders, which they lengthen by swinging their rods to and fro, and check from excessive lengthening by reversing in the air, thus giving them the exact regulated size; the cylinder being then opened and expanded, is removed to another furnace, and finally carried off, flattened, and finished.* A patent plate glass which has been recently introduced is obtained from sheet glass by a new process of grinding and polishing. Many other kinds of glass may also be seen, and we note especially the optical glass. In 1848 M. Bontemps joined Messrs. Chance in an attempt to improve and extend this manufacture. They ultimately succeeded in producing flint and crown discs of twenty-nine inches diameter (which were bought by the French Government for £1,000 each), and discs of twenty-six inches for other large telescopes. On the other hand, they make glass for microscopic uses from the 200th to the 300th of an inch in thickness. But the most remarkable and most interesting part of this gigantic establishment is the lighthouse branch, where those magnificent dioptric lights are made that have attracted so much notice in the International Exhibitions, the upper and lower portions of which are rings of prisms, while the centre is a series of refracting lenses; the whole being of brilliantly-polished glass. The manufacture of these is a wondrous spectacle. To this is devoted an area of nearly an acre and a half, a glass-house for casting, a steam-engine of forty-horse power, about forty newly-contrived machines for grinding with mathematical exactness and polishing the lenses and prisms of all forms; as many lathes, planing, and other machines in the fitting-shops, where lanterns, lamps, clockwork, and all metallic accessories are prepared; and, lastly, a staff of about a hundred workmen. Here Science and Art are indeed united! In the first shop great circular tables, on which the zones of glass are slowly ground and polished, whirl swiftly and incessantly round and round,—in the fitting shops, these zones are fixed into their frames of iron and gun-metal; and then we come to the erecting house where each optical apparatus is tried before being sent off. And "nothing," says Mr. Alan Stevenson, "can be more beautiful than an entire apparatus for a fixed light of the first order. It consists of a central belt of refractors, forming a hollow cylinder six feet in diameter and thirty inches high; below it are six triangular rings of glass ranged in a cylindrical form, and above, a crown of thirteen rings of glass, forming by their union a hollow cage composed of polished glass, ten feet high and six feet in diameter." A single lamp is placed in the focus of one of these, and a blaze of light is thrown seaward, which in some cases may be seen at a distance of thirty miles, either as a flash, with intervals of darkness, or as a constant beam. The weight of the unworked cast glass in a complete revolving light of the first order is about two and a quarter tons, and in a complete fixed light about two tons, assuming the prisms to be eighteen and eight in each light respectively. The value of a first-order fixed light with eighteen and eight prisms, with its accessories, is about £1,500; that of a first-order revolving light about £2,000. About a hundred and thirty sea-lights have been constructed by

* We may add that the art of painting on glass was resuscitated at Soho by Eginton, from whose hand came some of the most splendid stained glass in England.

* By the rectangular shape of this glass, and still more by the absence of the bull's-eye, a great saving was effected. Panes could be obtained of the full size of the sheets blown, and the only limit to their dimensions was the strength of the workmen.

Messrs. Chance for the British Government and for foreign coasts, as well as a large number of harbour lights. Messrs. Chance presented us with a list of dioptric lights constructed by them since 1855, which gives the locality and description of apparatus for 360 of these lights, and includes the coasts of almost every country. Some of the most remarkable are the 'Whalesey Skerries' in the Shetland Isles, a revolving light, described as perhaps the most powerful in the world; the Lundy Island light, also revolving, distinguished by the late Royal Commission on Lights as visible at the greatest distance of all the reported lights at home and abroad; the fixed light at the Orme's Head in North Wales, and the fixed light at Europa Point, Gibraltar. The Wolf Rock Light-house, near the Land's End, and the Souter Point light, near Sunderland, are also fine recent specimens; the former is a first-class revolving apparatus, showing alternate red and white flashes of equal power; the latter, a revolving light, giving white flashes, and remarkable as having the electric spark instead of an oil flame. It was stated some few years ago that Messrs. Chance had lost more than £20,000 in the manufacture of dioptric lights, which they nevertheless continued to carry on from patriotic motives, and not without the hope of final advantage. They are the only manufacturers of these lights in the United Kingdom, and there are but three others in the world, these being M. Lepaute, M. Sautter, and MM. Barbier and Fenestre, all of Paris. Who can look on these noble instruments without thinking of the dark night and the tempestuous sea,—the ship approaching the coast, the doubt and the dismay which chill the hearts of her officers and crew,—and the splendid outbursting of these friendly lights to guide the mariners safely to the desired haven?

The visitor is finally led to the warehouses, and sees, in a whole mile of store-rooms, stacks of crown and sheet glass, masses of prisms, crates of coloured glass of varying hue. He learns, also, that eighteen hundred and fifty people—men, women, and children—are employed, and from seventy to eighty thousand tons of coal annually consumed in these works, which have been visited by many individuals of distinction in science, art, and literature, and persons of all ranks, from princes downward.

We have alluded to the workpeople. They are well and kindly cared for. A large library and a comfortable reading-room are provided for their recreation, and a surgeon is attached to the works for their aid in sickness. But, more than all, admirable schools, with playground and gymnasium, are established for their children, with day and evening schools for the workpeople of both sexes. We were told that there are about one hundred and fifty teetotallers employed in the works. Some of the workpeople are Frenchmen, the descendants perhaps of those who came to this country of old from Lorraine. Amid all the convulsions of their native land they have here a peaceful home, where they may not only quietly earn their own bread, but daily witness the triumphs of science and art, and see their children growing up in the love of the country that gave them birth,—of the generous employers who not only provide for the good of their workmen, but for the culture and happiness of their workmen's little ones,—and of those employers' countrymen, once regarded as natural enemies of France, but now acknowledged to be the very best friends she has in all the world!

"Glass," says Sebastian Evans, "is at once the Prometheus and the Proteus of fabrics." How strange that this most brilliant and beautiful substance should be so largely manufactured in the *Black Country*. It is also an odd coincidence that productions so full of ingenious contrivance and elaborate design should be manufactured by *Chance*!

Having spent an hour or two at Spon Lane, we pass on to Oldbury. And now we are indeed in the Black Country, amid iron and steel works (including the famous "Brades" and "Bromford" works, the former of which mines its own coal as well as the ore that it sends elsewhere to be smelted),—among locomotive engine works, too, and railway carriage works; edge tool, brick, drainage pipe, phosphorus, alkali, copper extracting, naphtha, benzine, carbolic acid, and other works. In the ten years from 1851 to 1861 the population increased from 5,114 to 15,615, and is now about 18,000; but Oldbury is sadly notorious for the neglect of all that is healthful.

The people of Oldbury are chiefly miners and workers in the manufactories. The miners number about 600 families, but as the mines are nearly all worked out, very few men get more than two or three "turns" a week, for which some have to walk four or five miles daily. Boys work in the coal-pits in the proportion of about one boy to three men. All the trades of the place are fluctuating, the people being sometimes kept on day and night, and sometimes having nothing to do. Respectable employment for females is very much wanted. Many girls go three or four miles to work in a large screw factory near Birmingham. Others find employment here in the railway carriage works, painting and polishing; in the chemical works, packing; and in the alkali works, sack-making and labelling. Some women are employed at the mouth of the coal-pits, and both women and girls work with boys in the brick-yards, and may be seen returning half-naked from their labour, their faces, arms, and legs thickly plastered with the clay, which the younger girls carry on their heads (round which a rolled cloth is worn like a turban), and the others dash into the moulds so roughly as to splash every one near all over. Burritt tells us it has been estimated that seventy-five out of every hundred persons employed in the Black Country brick-fields are females, and that probably two-thirds of these are girls from nine to twelve years of age. But, incredible as it may appear, children far below this age are said to have been employed in the brick-fields of Oldbury; we have even heard of one little girl of *four* assisting her sister of *seven* to carry clay. Happily this is no longer the case. On the 1st January, 1872 (blessed and memorable day!) the brick-fields were visited by the Government Inspector, under the authority of the recent Act of Parliament, and all children below the age of sixteen sent to their homes. And things are not half so bad as they once were, for no women are allowed to go down into the pits, nor any children under ten years of age. The Mines and Collieries Bill, thanks to Lord Shaftesbury, has forbidden all that. Sad, indeed, was the state of things of old. Who has not read of the horrors of the coal mines, incredible as they would be but that they are too well proved? It was common for women, and girls between youth and womanhood, to go below; while at seven or eight, at six, nay at five, and sometimes even at four years of age, little children, both male and female, were

taken regularly in the morning to the pit. They went down ; the air was hot and heavy ; often the water dripped, rained, poured incessantly upon them. They stayed fourteen or sixteen hours below. Sometimes the roadways in the mines were but a yard or so high, and along these they crept on all-fours in a state of partial or entire nudity, each wearing a girdle to which a chain was attached, whereby they dragged the coal to the pit's mouth. In the more roomy places they were crowded together like cattle. In many cases they were subject to the cruel treatment of drivers, who urged them on with heavy blows. And when their work was done, they returned from the pits to dwellings only a little less horrible. Things are bad enough now. But the worst is over, thank God. It is pleasant to find, even in this dark region, wild flowers that tell of beautiful nature beyond. Among the pit-mounds there are sometimes, at all events, buttercups and marigolds, primroses and pimpernels, and other favourites of youth. But far away as the children are from the sea, and from the banks of the clear-flowing rivers, the mossy brooks and pebbly rills, with only the black and sluggish streams of the barge-laden canals, or stagnant scummy pools, to tell them of the waters, and often with little even of sunshine, or starshine, or blue unclouded sky, with miserable grimy dwellings, and a life of hard toil awaiting them, how we pity them ! And here they live, amid

" the unwearied crash and roar
Of iron powers, that urged by restless fire,
Toil ceaseless day and night, yet never tire :
* * * * *

The mighty arm of mist, that shakes the shore
Along the thronged canal, in ceaseless roar,
Urging the heavy forge, the clanking mill,
The rapid tilt."

Education is much more sought after for boys than for girls, but there is great need of compulsion here ; there should be about 3,000 children at school, there are only about half that number of pupils. It is thought that the Church of England and Dissent divide the population almost equally between them ; but fully half the working classes in Oldbury attend no place of worship. Most of them spend their Sundays in simple bodily rest ; but a great many go off by train, or get into the public-houses ; and dog-racing, pigeon-flying, and cock-fighting, with the reading of the Sunday paper, are the occupations of the Sabbath. And in general drinking habits are common. "Rum is the *cream* of the Black Country," and its curse. A bill met our eye as we passed through Oldbury which sufficiently indicated the attraction drink possesses for the people, informing the public that "A glass of fine home-brewed ale, wine, or spirit would be given away to all customers," at a certain boot-selling establishment.

Let us hope for improvement. Messrs. Chance have just commenced an annual flower show for their tenants at Oldbury, the first of which was held in the schools connected with their works. On the opening day, Mr. A. M. Chance observed that "the object of the firm was really to encourage habits of care, patience, and cleanliness in their work-people ; for any one who tended plants with success in such a place as Oldbury would have to exercise those qualities in no ordinary degree." And flower-culture will scarcely agree with hard drinking.

Varieties.

CHARLES DICKENS ON COPYRIGHT.—At the dinner given to Charles Dickens by the young men of Boston, in 1842, the subject of international copyright found expression in words that still remain unheeded. "There is one topic on which I am desirous to lay particular stress. It has, or should have, a strong interest for us all, since to its literature every country must look for one great means of refining and improving its people, and one great source of national pride and honour. You have in America great writers—great writers, who will live in all time, and are as familiar to our lips as household words. Deriving (which they all do in a greater or less degree, in their several walks) their inspiration from the stupendous country that gave them birth, they diffuse a better knowledge of it, and a higher love for it, over the civilised world. I take leave to say, in the presence of some of those gentlemen, that I hope the time is not far distant when they, in America, will receive of right some substantial profit and return in England from their labours ; and when we, in England, shall receive some substantial profit and return in America from ours. Pray, do not misunderstand me. Securing to myself from day to day the means of an honourable subsistence, I would rather have the affectionate regard of my fellow-men than I would have heaps and mines of gold. But the two things do not seem to be incompatible. They cannot be, for nothing good is incompatible with justice. There must be an international arrangement in this respect : England has done her part ; and I am confident that the time is not far distant when America will do hers. It becomes the character of a great country, firstly, because it is justice ; secondly, because without it you never can have and keep a literature of your own."

MRS. RYVES.—This extraordinary lady, who died on the 7th December last, was the heroine of the *cause célèbre* for many years constantly before the legal tribunals. The active figure of the "little old lady in black" was familiar in the neighbourhood of Haverstock Hill for a lengthened period. Until the moment of her death she retained full possession of her faculties. She was born on March 16, 1797. The father of Mrs. Ryves was John Thomas Serres, a celebrated painter and marine draughtsman to the Admiralty. The late Mr. Clarkson Stanfield was his great pupil. Her grandfather, Dominic Serres, was one of the first forty incorporated by the Act of George III as Royal Academician, and Mrs. Ryves for years received an annuity from the Academy. The paintings of her father and grandfather may be seen at Windsor Castle, in the Painted Hall at Greenwich, and at Hampton Court Palace. Their family was of French extraction, and numbered an archbishop and a marquis among the members. Her mother was the celebrated Olive Wilmot, better known as claiming to be the Princess Olive of Cumberland, daughter of his Royal Highness Henry Frederick Duke of Cumberland, brother to George III. Mrs. Ryves was married to Anthony Thomas, son of Captain Thomas Ryves, of Ranston Hall, Dorset, and obtained a divorce in the Ecclesiastical Court. She leaves two sons and three daughters to lament her death.

ENGLAND AND FRANCE CONTRASTED.—The real difference between the two nations, the one essentially God-fearing and serious, the other God-denying and frivolous, was forcibly stated by the journal "La France," on the occasion of the public prayers offered for the Prince of Wales. The passage is historically valuable, and worthy of preservation :— "Political life is suspended in England. One sole anxiety absorbs all minds—the health of the Prince of Wales. An entire nation, which is still impressed with strong convictions, turns to God and partakes of the grief which afflicts its Sovereign, whose son is, perhaps, about to die. And yet the Prince of Wales appeared to be far from popular. He possessed neither the qualities nor the defects which old Albion admires or tolerates, and the English people were sometimes disinclined to regard in him the nominal master of their destinies, the future guardian of that Charter which is the basis of their liberties. But when death was threatening him the whole of Great Britain was at once excited. In its patriotic loyalty all errors and mistakes were forgotten, and nothing was remembered but the danger which threatened the Heir to the Crown. What a spectacle and what a lesson ! The Prince of Wales is dying, and yet upon the other side of the Channel no one laughs, no one insults the high-placed personage struck down by sickness. The Princess of Wales quits the bedside of the dying man, not to seek necessary repose, but to hasten to the church to pray and to listen to prayers—and no one laughs. The Queen, whom calumny sought to wound but the other day, kneels with her

veil of widowhood beside the probable deathbed of her first-born—and no one laughs. The Council—Messrs. Bruce, Gladstone, Forster, the Lord President and Lord Chancellor, all whom England holds in highest esteem for talent, or position, or for age, which is also a dignity—address themselves to the Archbishop of Canterbury and call upon him to prepare ‘new forms of prayer to appeal to the Almighty on behalf of his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales.’ And the people, instead of mocking at this, rush to obtain copies of these prayers, and repeat them in their places of worship. Lutherans, Calvinists, Methodists, Anglicans, Catholics, Jews, all implore the Deity to prolong the days of the future Sovereign of England. This people has the courage, the good sense, not to disown either its history, its past, its Government, or its God, and yet it is a free people among all—who will dispute that? Such a spectacle affects us greatly, and we look around us with bitterness. In vain, alas! do we look for one of these powerful bonds of union upon which we might rely in a moment of trial, and which might unite a nation in a common sentiment. We have no greater faith in men than we have in God. There is disunion even in our churches. And yet we are always talking of our unity, and declaring that we are the envy of other nations on that account. Is not this one of our self-complacent illusions? Switzerland, the United States, and England, those three countries where the dignity of man is so well understood, retain respect for the governing principle; they accept public prayer and humble themselves; we in our disasters and misfortunes could think of nothing but mutual recrimination, and blush to address a prayer to God. Is that an advance? We may be allowed to doubt it. Faith has never derogated from man's dignity, it has never rendered him less desirous of liberty. Who would dare to say that England had abased itself because it partakes of the grief which afflicts the family that governs it, because it obeys its natural chiefs who direct it to pray as it would obey them if they called upon it to fight and to sacrifice itself for the preservation of its old liberties? Since we are talking so much at present about reforming ourselves, let us begin by learning that affectionate respect for authority of which England is at this moment affording us so striking an example. And if the British Monarchy should appeal to our Republican intolerance a bad model, let us look towards the American Republic. All who have visited the United States can affirm that the expression of sympathy with the rulers, a belief in God, and even the outward practice of religion, are not incompatible with Republican virtues. At New York and at New Orleans prayers were offered up for President Lincoln, as to-day prayers are offered up throughout the three kingdoms for the Prince of Wales. When shall we learn how to pray, all together, for any one?"

DISCHARGED PRISONERS.—The Discharged Prisoners' Aid Society was founded in 1857, and up to the present time has assisted no less than 6,764 convicts, male and female. According to the last annual report, the number of fresh cases undertaken by the society from the 1st of June, 1870, to the 31st of May, 1871, was 472, being more than double the number undertaken during the preceding twelve months. The average number of discharged prisoners assisted by the society during the past year was, therefore, forty a month. The following are the particulars of the cases of men who have been assisted during the past twelve months. Obtained employment and are doing well in the metropolitan district, 169; sent to different places beyond the metropolitan district and placed under the supervision of the local police, 162; sent to relatives and friends living abroad, 36; obtained berths on board ship, 38; not yet employed, but under care of the society, 15; reported to the police for failing to notify change of address, required by Act of Parliament, 27; re-convicted, 17; unsatisfactory, 5; died, 3; total, 472.

HERCULES AND THE HYDRA.—Mr. Frank Buckland, writing in “Land and Water,” says:—“In September, 1863, there was a large living octopus at the Zoological Gardens, Regent's Park. While making an experiment to see if this animal possessed any electric powers, an idea suddenly struck me that the hydra which Hercules killed was simply a huge octopus, or, as they call him at Folkestone, a ‘man-sucker.’ An author who wrote in 1658 thus described the hydra:—‘A monstrous dragon with whom Hercules strove, and, as he struck off one head, or tentation, so two or three others rose continuously in the room thereof.’ This is just what would happen if a man fought with an octopus, for when the conqueror cut off one arm or tentation—mark the word—the octopus would put out another, in its turn to be severed. My idea of Hercules' hydra being an octopus was subsequently strengthened by the following letter which I received from the late Mr. Pentland:—

“I have seen a letter from you in which you put forward the theory that the dread hydra which Hercules killed was a great ‘man-sucker.’ I can fully confirm your view from an examination of several Roman terra-cottas in the Campagna and Vatican Museums, where the demigod is represented slaying an immense octopus, which is very correctly represented, although sometimes with more or fewer arms than in the great cephalopod. I think you might see representations of these ornamental tiles in Campagna's work on the terra-cottas of his collection, which will be found in the library of the British Museum. The nearest representation of the living octopus is in the Gregorian Museum at the Vatican, where it forms one of a series of the labours of Hercules, and is probably of the time of the Antonines.”

POSTAGE FOR THE POOR.—The incident which led Sir Rowland Hill to take up the subject of the penny postage is a little romance worthy of historical remembrance. Coleridge the poet, as his friend Miss Martineau relates, was one day walking in the English Lake country, when he saw the postman present a letter to a poor woman at her cottage door. The woman said she had no money to pay the postage, and she refused to accept the letter. The poet, however, advanced a shilling for the purpose. The letter was opened, and it was found to be a blank; not a word was written on the paper. The woman explained:—She had a brother residing at a distance, and they had made an agreement that he should occasionally send a blank sheet that his sister might know that he was alive and well. She had the power of refusing to accept the letter, and the Post Office authorities could not come upon the writer, for no name was given; the sheet, as I have said, was blank. Coleridge had often told this story, and at last it reached Rowland Hill. He saw the harshness, the cruelty of the case, and began inquiring and calculating, rousing and guiding the whole country, and melting away even official opposition.

AMERICA IN 1833.—Indeed 'tis a most marvellous country! It stands unparalleled under every aspect in which it can be considered, and presents one of the most interesting and extraordinary subjects of contemplation that the eye of a politician or the more extensive gaze of a philosopher can scan. A land, peopled as this has been by the overflowings of all other lands; to the south, colonised by the adventurous but thrifty younger branches of noble families of England, and in great measure also by men whose vices and crimes, as well as their utter poverty, drove them to find shelter away from the society whose laws they had outraged; to the north, again, this new world owing its first civilised inhabitants to the purest and loftiest spirit of Freedom—the holiest and most steadfast spirit of Religion (emanating from England, too); and all having received their first dawn of civilisation from bodies of men differing from each other in object, in religious faith, in country, and lineage: a whole continent thus strangely reclaimed from utter savagery, and in the process of a century and a half becoming, from a desolate and utter wilderness, a great political existence, taking a firm and honourable station among the powers of the world. A land abounding in cultivation, civilisation, and populous towns, full of wealth, of business, of importance; vast ports receiving the flags of every nation under heaven; to see huge ocean steamboats carrying hundreds of people to and fro every hour along the Hudson, the St. Lawrence, the Mississippi, whose waters a hundred years ago were never visited but by the Indian canoe; to see forests felled, and towns arising, railways and canals traversing and connecting what were wild tracts of interminable wood and waste; to see life, and all its wonderful arts and sciences, reclaiming these vast solitudes to the uses of man and the purposes of civilised existence: this mighty operation, which is at this instant going on under our very eyes, makes this country one of great interest, of admiration, of anxious observation to all the world. 'Tis a marvellous country indeed!—*Letter from Fanny Kemble to the Rev. William Harness, Boston, May 5, 1833.*

NURSERY RHYMES OF THE FUTURE.—The learned professor who objected to Addison's creation hymn, “The spacious firmament on high,” because it taught errors in science, will be pleased to hear that a new set of nursery rhymes are prepared, of which we give two specimen stanzas:—

“Twinkle, twinkle, solar star,
Now we've found out what you are,
When unto the noonday sky;
We the spectroscope apply.”

and—

“Little Jack Horner, of Latin no scorne,
In the second declension did spy,
How of nouns there are some
That ending in 'um'
Do not form the plural in 'i.' ”

Wa
awk
him
vanis
it
No